

but as a believer in constitutional advance. He was on excellent terms with Prince Napoleon, the *enfant terrible* of the Second Empire. Walewski was a mediocrity, Persigny impossible. The Emperor's loss of grip when his health began to deteriorate in 1865 played into the hands of Rouher, the ablest of his Ministers but more a lawyer than a statesman. The first five volumes describe the formation and operations of the Ollivier Ministry which took office on January 2nd, 1870. The Emperor was more anxious for the services of the eloquent lawyer than was the latter to take office; for his enemies, led by such gladiators as Rochefort and Gambetta, became ever more dangerous and the collapse of the Empire was widely expected. If anyone could keep it alive, it was Ollivier. The programme of the new Minister was to save liberty by authority and authority by liberty. He insisted on choosing his colleagues, with the significant exception of the Service Ministers, and no constitutional sovereign, we are assured, more fully respected the liberty of the man he had honoured with his confidence. The plebiscite of May, 1870, with its immense majority for the Liberal Empire, is hailed as a vindication of the statesmanship of the author and his chief, though the unexpectedly large number of hostile votes in the army aroused some anxiety. "I felt a profound satisfaction, not that of the man of ambition who has attained the object of his desires, nor that of the vain man who flatters himself that he has won renown, but that of the thinker witnessing the confirmation of his plans, that of the savant who, having proved by calculation that a star existed in a certain sphere of the heavens, perceives it through his telescope. I had formed a responsible Parliamentary Ministry and by successive steps substituted a Liberal for an authoritarian Constitution. Now

the people informed me by more than seven million votes that I was not mistaken in believing my work to be good. Of course a considerable part of the success was due to the unshakable fidelity of the people to the Napoleons. Jacques Bonhomme had remained faithful to him. If I had at that moment died of fever, like Cavour, I should have been unanimously acclaimed as one of the rare statesmen of the nineteenth century." *Dis aliter visum.* " A cyclone which I could not foresee and which I had no time to resist broke over my work, destroyed it, and relegated me to the company of the vanquished and ostracised/* Napoleon in, we are told, worked consistently for peace after the Italian campaign of 1859, ^{anc}^ neither Ollivier nor